

This is ACHERON, the official journal of the National Fantasy Fan Federation Games Bureau Diplomacy Division. It appears at irregular intervals. It is free to Members of the Division, 10/\$1 to members of the Bureau, 10/\$1.50 to others. This is Pandemonium Publication #313, edited and published by Rod Walker, 5058 Hawley Blvd., San Diego CA 92116. Bureau Chairman: Don Miller. Division Chief: Rod Walker. Archives Director, Walt Buchanan. Orphan Games Director, Rod Walker. U.K. Data Director, Don Turnbull.

ACHERON 7
3 May 1971

NEW MEMBERS. Three new members have joined the Division this past month. Two are Gamesmasters and the third was elected to membership some time earlier. Continuing the count from last issue:

- 39. Ray A. Bowers, Jr., 612 Moore St., Festus MO 63028.
- 40. Lee Childs, P.O. Box 2813, Linfield College, McMinnville OR 97128.
- 41. Gary Gyax, 330 Center St., Lake Geneva WI 53147.

ELECTION '71. Only 24 ballots were cast in the election for Division Chief. Votes were cast for the incumbent and for 3 write-in candidates. Final results (confirmed by Chairman Miller by telephone, 2 May 1971):

Rod Walker.20
Buddy Tretick2
Lewis Pulsipher . . .1
Hal Naus.1

The names of members who voted (but not how they voted) are being tabulated by Don, and will be certified to me by mail for publication in ACHERON 8. Division Chief Rod Walker is elected to serve the term 1 June 1971-31 May 1973.

BALLOT RESULTS. Of 40 outstanding ballots, 31 were returned. Those submitting ballots: Andrus, Barber, Beyerlein, Borecki, Bowers, Buchanan, Childs, Gaylord, Holcombe, Johnson, Key, Krigsman, Lakofka, Lebling, McCalum, Mensinger, Miller, Naus, Peery, Pulsipher, Reinsel, St.Cyr, Schaefer, Smythe, Turnbull, VanAndel, vonMetzke, Walker, Ward, Warden, Welsh.

Failing to submit ballots (* indicates consecutive misses; those marked by *** are inso facto dropped from the Division): Childers***, Just**, Lindsay**, Manogg***, Schleicher*, Tretick*, Wells*. Also failing: Calhame (not required, but appreciated), Gyax (joined late in month).

Item 1. Endorsement of the Diplomacy Association.

Yes	No	Ab.	Should the Diplomacy Division officially endorse the Diplomacy Association and urge its members to recommend to their readers that they join it?
12	8	11	

Item 2. Advisory: Endorsement of new Rulebook

Yes	No	Ab.	Recommend complete adoption for all games, including those in progress.
7	20	4	

Yes	No	Ab.	Recommend complete adoption for games which bein in 1972 or later.
12	10	9	

Yes	No	Ab.	Endorse, but not make any further recommendation.
12	7	12	

Yes	No	Ab.	Make no recommendation. [I.e., take no action.]
2	21	8	

DIVISION ACTION.

1. The Diplomacy Association. The NFFFGB Diplomacy Division endorses the Diplomacy Association and urges its members to recommend to their readers that they join it. Members are reminded, however, that there is nothing binding in this. You may or may not so recommend, as you wish. I hope that you will at least mention this decision in your publications.

2. The New Rulebook. The results of the advisory vote clearly indicates two things. First, the membership is against taking no stand at all on the new Rulebook. Second, the membership does not favor taking so strong a stand as to recommend a change-over even for games in progress. A good many members expressed the hope that we would all have a chance to see the new Rulebook before voting on what to do about it. The original notion knocking about in my head was to vote on it sight-unseen so that the absence of pet preferences, or the presence of pet peeves, would not affect the voting. However, it does seem fairer to wait until we have all had a look at it, so further balloting on this subject is deferred until such time as the new Rulebook has been in general circulation at least 30 days. When that will be is uncertain. GRI apparently wants the new Rules out in time for the Yule trade, which means printing it probably not later than the end of summer (21 September). If so, then we will probably be considering this question in more definitive form this fall.

DUES.

Division dues (\$1) for the period 1 June 1971-31 May 1972 (a one-day change to conform to terms of office) are now payable from members and are due by 1 June 1971. Please send your dues as soon as possible. Those whose dues are not received by then will cease to be members and will not receive ACHERON 8. Dues for that period are already on hand from: Bowers, Childs, Gaylord, Gygax, Smythe, Tretick, Walker, Ward, Warden, and Welsh. Allan Calhamer, a member for life, is not required to pay dues. Please make checks payable to Rod Walker.

DIPLOGROK.

I am pleased to announce that through the generosity of one of our members, DIPLOGROK will be coming out without the delay anticipated due to Gary Jones' temporary increase in jobload. Lee Childs, who is already well known for his determined and almost single-handed rescue of the LIMBOURG GAZETTE and its games, has come forward to aid DIPLOGROK. Gary will edit the 'zine, and Lee has volunteered to publish it for the cost of postage alone. The first issue will be out in mid or late June. Contributions for DIPLOGROK should be sent to Gary Jones at 1070 Colgate, Memphis TN 38106.

DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION.

I have yet to receive a reply from Edi Birsan to my previous communication, mentioned last issue, on DD-DA cooperation. A follow-up letter has also gone unanswered, although it is fairly recent. The silence from New York has been broken only by the publication, in GRAUSTARK, of the news that the DA's 'zine, WAZIR, would appear soon. I will keep the membership posted on any further developments.

ORPHAN GAMES -- DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Finding homes for orphaned games is one of our major projects. I am pleased to report that for the first time in some months, every postal Diplomacy game on the "active" list is either active or in the process of being

reactivated. What follows is a brief resumé of how the process of game reactivation proceeds and a summary of the games reactivated during 1971.

The Reactivation Process. It is hard to determine when a Gamesmaster is getting ready to default, but if something like two months have gone by without any progress, one can at least suspect that this is going on. The elapsed time before I take action is generally longer. In this, as in the entire procedure, there are no specific standards. Each case, as each 'zine, is different, and must be handled by ear. The procedure described is, in general, what is done. In each instance, one unalterable goal is to give the original Gamesmaster every opportunity to speak up and to halt the process of transferring his games if he really intends to continue them himself.

The first step is a letter to the Gamesmaster/editor concerned. The content will vary, but generally the letter will note that the games appear to be stalled, and will offer help in restarting them. I offer to help locate publication facilities, to locate a temporary new home for the games until the original GM is able to take them back himself, or to arrange permanent transfer of the games if he wishes. The letter also states that if no reply is received, I have to assume that the GM does not intend to continue, and that I will then proceed to find a new GM. A deadline, normally 3-4 weeks later, is set for a reply. This formal letter, by the way, is usually preceded by one or more informal letters on the same subject, if I have any occasion at all to write the GM concerned.

If no reply is received, and this is the case in most instances, I then put out an issue of GEHENNA. This is sent to the players, and asks them to respond in some way, usually by voting whether or not to continue the games. In one case (BROBDINGNAG), players were asked to vote on whether or not they wished a new Gamesmaster. This has implications which will be considered separately later on. A copy is also sent to the original GM, of course, who may still stop the transfer process by himself continuing the games.

Once the players have responded, and if they wish to continue the games, a follow-up issue of GEHENNA is published, transferring the games to the new Gamesmaster(s). The Division is at this point acting in the name of the players. It is then up to the new Gamesmaster(s) to carry on the game(s). One of the two issues of GEHENNA concerned will list current positions in the game(s), and supply center holdings, along with names and last known addresses of the players. The entire process takes about two months or less.

Reactivations during 1971.

POLASKA. Dan Evans began two tournaments, with a total of 39 games in them. He eventually abandoned these games. Since 39 games were manifestly too many to stick anybody with, we instead determined how many players were interested in continuing the tournament in any form. Eventually, only 7 responded. These 7 were organized into a 7-game tournament (much like those appearing in LA GUERRE under John Mensinger. These games now appear in THE WORLD NEWS & WAR REPORT. The original 39 games were cancelled.

VERBAL CHAOS, LTD. Bill McDuffie, after swearing mightily that he would keep up, finally stopped altogether. The 5 games involved were, on the basis of a player poll, divided between 5 Division GMs: Chris Schleicher, Bob Johnson, Bob VanAndel, Larry St.Cyr, and P.M. Gaylord. Bob is continuing the main title (VCL), and Larry is putting his in a new 'zine

called RETALIATION. The others have presumably incorporated the games within their own 'zines.

BROBDINGNAG. Ed Hulle took over BROB from John McCallum and eventually was not able to keep up with it. In early April the players voted to take on a new Gamesmaster. Owing to some confusion on my part, the GM originally promised was not able to undertake the task of keeping this venerable 'zine and its 6 games intact. BROBDINGNAG is temporarily under my editorship until a GM can be located who was connected with postal Diplomacy at least since 1967 or 1968, and who can bring the 'zine up to its formerly high standards.

STAB. John Koning's fine hydrazine has been foundering for the better part of 2 years, off and on, and when John stopped even answering his mail, transfer operations were undertaken. The entire STAB operation is presently under Conrad vonMetzke. This summer, the TRANTOR portion will revert to its original editor, John Smythe.

RAGNAROK. John Koning's other 'zine is being continued under three Gamesmasters. Two games are under Bob Johnson, who has them within VERBAL CHAOS, LT. Two more are under Mehran Thomson, Jr., who is continuing the old title. The fifth is under P.M. Gaylord.

THE VOICE. The Division is currently engaged in helping Jeff Key find a temporary GM/editor/publisher for his main 'zine until his schedule will permit him to take it up again.

ANIARA. This has been transferred temporarily by Key to Eric Just. Jeff will still be publishing other 'zines during this interim, but very infrequently.

IF. The 3 postal games being played as part of the IFW Open Tournament stalled out under Bill McDuffie's control. IFW President Len Lakofka has provided a new home for these games, which were restarted (at Len's request) through the Division. This was accomplished by the latest issue of GEHENNA, #15.

PONTEVEDRIA, our 'zine intended to help New Blood become acclimated, is now in its 3rd issue (issues 2 and 3 supplement #1). Members of the Division may purchase a complete set for 15¢, but there is nothing in them you don't already know, so I would not suggest you buy them unless you are a completist nut. Copies are already going to the completist nuts I know of: Buchanan, Key, and Miller.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS: I just picked up a copy of the British version of Diplomacy for \$4.00. The rules are differently organized (but about the same), the board is very different, and the pieces are vastly different. This seems to be considered an exotic "import" item, for those who may be interested in finding it. It is not as nice as the American set, but it is fun for \$4.

WHO OWNS A GAME? This question has been raised by the way in which BROBDINGNAG was transferred. The players were specifically asked whether they wished to remain under the present GM or have a new one.

The question raised here is important. It has generally been assumed that a Gamesmaster has complete control over any game he runs. But it is the players who paid for the game. One would assume that so long as the GM met his responsibilities for orderly and impartial management of the

game, there should be no question of transferring it. But if the players have a proprietary interest in the game, then there must be some point at which they might wish to exercise it. This point clearly had come in the case of the BROB games. The question is, how might some sort of line be drawn between GM control and player rights? In other words, do players have a manifest right to elect a new GM and, if so, under what circumstances might that right be exercised?

I urge the membership to help me answer those questions. Letters on the subject could be sent to Gary Jones for publication in DIPLOGROK. I would also appreciate any comments you might have. This may be a question about which the Division will want to take a public stand. If so, your comments will help me formulate some advisory questions for a future ballot which, in turn, may lead to a vote on a recommended policy.

DO YOU USE STAND-BY PLAYERS? If so, please let me know whether s/b's get a free ride, or are required to subscribe, or what, and how badly you need them. I covered this subject partially in PONTEVEDRIA 3, but would like to have a more complete list in PONT.4. Please send this information with your 1971/2 dues.

THERE IS NO BALLOT with this issue. It would seem preferable to determine first the exact membership of the Division before proceeding to further votes. Besides, there seems to be precious little business to transact this time around.

GENTLE REMINDERS.

1. Your \$1 dues must be in by 1 June 1971.
2. We still need a Ratings Director to design and/or maintain a Division rating system. Anybody?
3. We still need a Rules Director to develop a guide to the House-Rules of various 'zines. This is a big but important and necessary job.
4. DIPLOGROK needs your articles, letters, and support. Give it a bit of publicity in your 'zines, please.
5. Your flyer can be sent out with PONTEVEDRIA for the modest fee stipulated in ACHERON 5.

BACK TO REACTIVATIONS. I forgot:

INTERNATIONAL ENQUIRER. After an official Division inquiry, all I.E. material was transferred to Harry Manogg, who plans to have something out pretty soon. I am still monitoring this situation.

LEGATVS/FRIGATE. Axel Krigsman is still on top of his own 'zine. Negotiations for temporary transfer appear to have stalled, but not through any fault of Axel's. We'll see how it goes.

LA GUERRE is still looking for sufficient stand-by players with which to restart some of its stalled games. This process has been slowed by Buddy's travelling in connection with work. I will be in touch from time to time on this, in case the Division can be of assistance.

And that seems to be it for this time.

DON'T, PLEASE, FORGET YOUR DUES.